



Community-Led Traffic Calming Guidebook

*A program from the
Department of Public Works*



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Introduction

What is traffic calming?

Traffic calming uses physical design measures to reduce dangerous driving and change the behavior of people driving. It can be used to reduce driver's speeds, to make people walking and biking feel safer using the street, and to improve the quality of life for people living on the street. Traffic calming can be used at a single intersection, along several blocks, or at a neighborhood-wide level.

How does the program work?

The Community-Led Traffic Calming Program allows property owners, residents, business owners, and community members to request traffic calming measures to address traffic-related concerns. Property owners may be assessed a portion of the cost of construction for traffic calming improvements.

How can I make a request?

You're in the right place! Flip to the next page to review the three steps you and your neighbors need to complete before the Department of Public Works (DPW) takes the lead.

Who should I contact with questions?

Email TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov or call 414-286-CITY (2489) and ask to be connected to Community-Led Traffic Calming staff.



Pinned-on Curb Extension on S. 6th Street

Program Overview



STEP 1 - Review this guidebook.

Meet with your neighbors – renters, homeowners, businesses, other properties on the street – to talk about the issues you’re facing.



STEP 2 - Suggest the traffic calming measures you want to install.

Using this guidebook, identify the traffic calming measures that may provide the best solution.

DPW staff will provide guidance and determine the location of installations. There may be times when the suggested traffic calming measures will not work for the type of street. DPW staff can help identify alternate solutions.



Not sure what will work best? Request the Traffic Calming Lending Library (Pages 13-16) to try out different options with your neighbors!



STEP 3 - Fill out and submit the Community-Led Traffic Calming request form and gather signatures from residents on the street.

Residents from at least 50% of addresses on the impacted block(s)* that will be assessed for the project must sign the Community-Led Traffic Calming Signature Sheet (See Appendix) to show initial support and start the request process.

Signatures can come from residents who are not property owners, but addresses must be unique. For example, three roommates living at the same address will only be counted as one address.

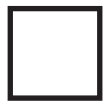
* The impacted blocks vary by traffic calming measure. See the description of each traffic calming measure to see which blocks are impacted.



Your work is done!

DPW staff will take the lead on the rest of the steps.

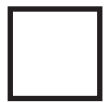
Program Overview, continued



STEP 4 - DPW staff reviews your request.

This review may include, but is not limited to, roadway classification; street width; traffic volumes and existing speed studies; crash history of the street; nearby neighborhood parks, schools, or other important locations; future projects on the street; and utility conflicts.

If DPW identifies challenges related to your request, or recommends additional or different traffic calming measures, DPW staff will contact you to further discuss your request and potential next steps.



STEP 5 - DPW staff design the traffic calming measure(s).

DPW staff determine optimal spacing, location and size of traffic calming measures while balancing utility needs, drainage design, future development considerations, and turning movements for motor vehicle traffic. Depending on how complex the design is, this step could take up to a year.



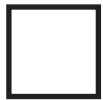
STEP 6 - DPW prepares a cost estimate.

Per City Ordinance Chapter 115-43, DPW staff estimate the cost of construction and calculate assessments for impacted property owners. The local alderperson conducts a postcard survey to the impacted property owners, which will include the cost of traffic calming improvements per property, to determine if the majority of property owners are in favor of paying for and installing traffic calming. Generally, impacted property owners have two to four weeks to return the postcard.

Why could this step take so long?

For more complex designs, DPW has additional elements of internal review and coordination. These extra steps ensure that the design is aligned with the City's long-term goals. Elements include reviewing opportunities for funding, coordination with other nearby projects, field surveys, utility coordination, and more.

Program Overview, continued



STEP 7 - The project is scheduled for public hearing for levying of assessments.

The local alderperson notifies DPW of the results of the postcard survey. If the results are in opposition to the traffic calming measure, the project may be omitted from consideration. If the project proceeds, results of the survey are then shared with the Public Works Committee of the Milwaukee Common Council for their consideration when they vote on installation of the traffic calming measure(s).

Each property owner receives a notice of public hearing via mail and is welcome to attend to provide testimony in support of or against the project, though attendance at the meeting is not required. Public Works Committee meetings are typically held every three weeks, usually on a Wednesday, starting at 9 a.m.



STEP 8 - The project will be constructed!

If the Public Works Committee approves the project, installation will be during typical construction season, mid-April to mid-October (weather permitting). DPW bids projects out to a contractor, who will determine the installation timing.

NOTE: This process takes a minimum of six months, and may take over a year, from the time the request is received.

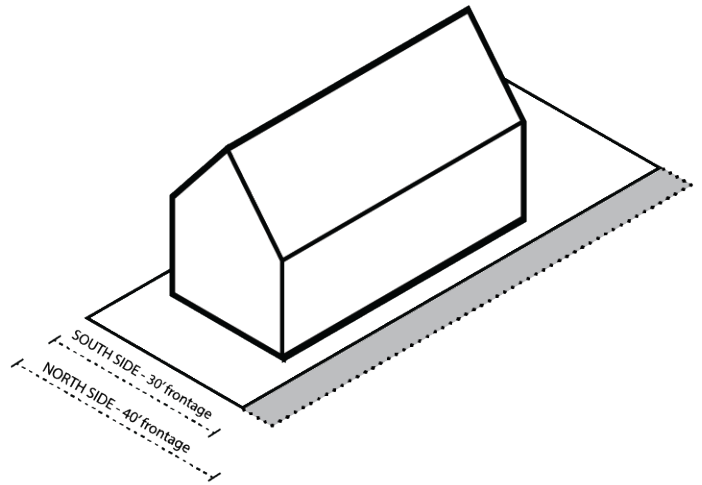


Traffic Island, Full Concrete

Program Costs

Each traffic calming measure has a cost associated with its design and construction. Property owners pay for a portion of the cost of design and construction of these measures. Because each traffic calming measure has unique construction costs and impacts to surrounding motor vehicle traffic, the amount charged and the properties that are charged varies by measure.

On the pages describing each traffic calming measure (Pages 8-12), you will find an “estimated cost per linear foot of frontage,” which means the length of your property’s yard. In general, homes on the north side of the City have approximately 40 feet of frontage, and homes on the south side of the City have approximately 30 feet of frontage.



You will find an estimate of the cost per property on each page, but note that these numbers are for planning purposes only. DPW staff will calculate final costs and inform property owners when the aldermanic postcard survey is mailed.

Cost FAQs

What if I can't pay for the cost all at once?

Bills are sent at least one year after construction completion in observance of the City's construction contract warranty. For bills over \$125, property owners can choose to pay for the cost of traffic calming over 10 years at the interest rate as noted at the time of the public hearing.

What if I sell my property before the traffic calming is paid for?

The cost of construction needs to be negotiated between the buyer and seller at the time of sale. The Title Company is required to run a search on the property to determine if there are any outstanding special assessments, delinquent charges or real estate tax bills prior to closing.

Continued on the next page

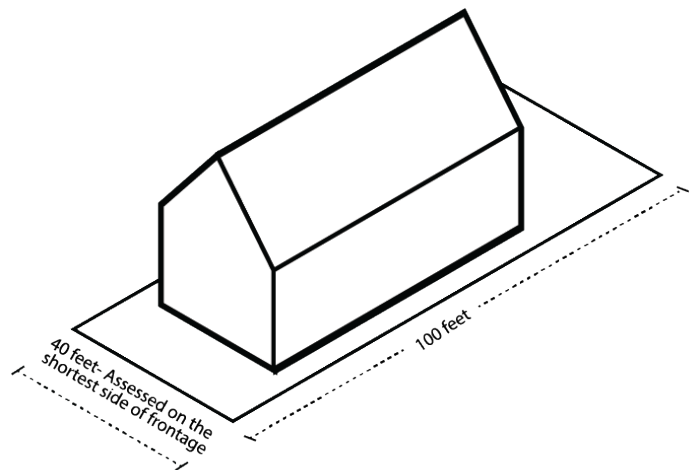
Program Costs, continued

What if I don't own the house/apartment I live in or the building my business is in, but I still want traffic calming on my street? Or, what if I have concerns about a street that I don't live on?

Requests are accepted from residents, business owners, property owners, and anyone concerned about the safety of a street. Signatures on the Community-Led Traffic Calming sheet must be from residents that live or have businesses on impacted blocks of the request.

What if there are tax-exempt properties, such as parks, Milwaukee Public Schools buildings, or vacant lots, on my block?

Tax status has no impact on the ability to request traffic calming. Vacant lots and easements are not taken into consideration when the results from the aldermanic survey are tallied. Tax-exempt properties such as private schools, churches, Milwaukee County Parks, etc. are assessed for improvements.



What if I live in a corner property?

Assessments are calculated based on the "shortest side" frontage. For example, if your side yard frontage is 100 feet and your front yard frontage is 40 feet, you will be assessed based on 40 feet of frontage.

What if the City constructs traffic calming on my street through a project it initiated, and it isn't requested through the Community-Led Traffic Calming program?

The City often initiates traffic safety projects that include traffic calming measures (e.g. Safe Routes to School, Bike Boulevards, etc). Property owners are not assessed for the traffic calming on City-initiated projects.

What if I live on the border of the City? Are people who live outside of the City of Milwaukee assessed for traffic calming?

DPW staff will contact the neighboring municipality to coordinate work on streets with shared municipal responsibility.



Have a question that wasn't answered?

Email TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov or call 414-286-CITY (2489) and ask to be connected to Community-Led Traffic Calming staff.

Terminology

The following definitions will help you to understand different terms in this guidebook.



Curb Extension, Pinned-on

Pinned-on Concrete

Pinned-on concrete is a construction method that can be used to construct traffic circles, curb extensions, chicanes, neck-downs, and pedestrian refuge islands. Construction workers use a form to pour concrete in the shape of the traffic calming device on top of the existing street surface. Steel dowels, or “pins” are used to secure the concrete to the street. This type of construction can be used when there are drainage conflicts. This method is less expensive than full concrete, but grass, trees, and other plantings cannot be placed in it.



Curb Extension, Full Concrete

Full Concrete

Full concrete is a construction method that can be used to construct traffic circles, curb extensions, chicanes, neck downs, and pedestrian refuge islands. Construction workers must excavate into the ground to construct concrete curb. Because the excavation is deeper, full concrete might not be feasible when there are utility conflicts under the street and cannot be used when there are drainage conflicts. This method is more expensive than pinned-on concrete, but mulch; stone; or grass, trees, and other plantings may be placed in them if space allows.



Average Daily Traffic (ADT)

Average Daily Traffic, noted in this guide as “ADT,” means the average number of motor vehicles that pass along a street in a day. Speed humps and chicanes can only be constructed on streets below a certain ADT, and speed tables are used on streets with higher ADTs. Use WisDOT’s Traffic Counts interactive map to see what the ADT on your street is. If your street doesn’t have an ADT on this map, it is probably low enough for speed humps and chicanes. Speed tables also have an upper speed limit of 35 MPH.

Traffic Calming Measures

The following pages describe different traffic calming measures available through the Community-Led Traffic Calming Program. Each page describes the measure and the costs associated with it.

All costs in this guidebook are based on the average of construction bids received between 2022-25. The costs per linear foot of property frontage are based on a 33% recovery rate in 2026, as authorized by City Ordinance Chapter 115. These rates are recalculated each year, and this guidebook will be updated annually to reflect the new rates. Please note that these costs are estimates; final costs will be developed during the project design (see Step 6 on page 3).

Traffic calming measures can be used as a solution to traffic issues in a targeted area, or they can be combined to address issues along a larger street corridor.

Speed Hump

Speed humps are rounded, raised areas of asphalt constructed across a street. They slow the speeds of people driving to 10-15 MPH over the hump. Speed humps are most often used on residential streets and are not placed in front of driveways.

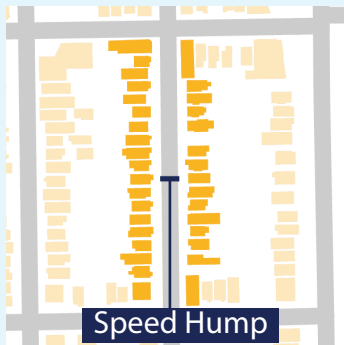
When should you use a speed hump?

- When the street's ADT is 3,000 or lower
- When neighbors have concerns about speeding in the middle of a block
- When there are no other stop controls (stop signs or traffic signals) at either end of the block

Note: Speed humps can be used on streets with stop controls, but if stop controls are present, a different traffic calming element may better address neighbors' concerns.

Who pays for it?

- Block it is constructed on



	Asphalt
Total	Approximately \$7,000; varies based on street width
Cost per linear foot of property frontage	\$2.75
Typical cost per property	40' frontage = \$118 30' frontage = \$82.50

Traffic Calming Measures, continued

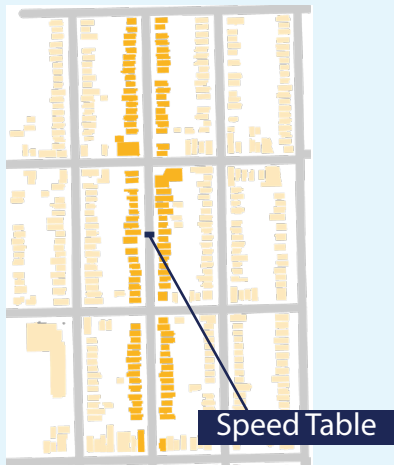
Speed Table

A speed table is similar to a speed hump, but is made of concrete, is longer, and has a flat top. Speed tables slow the speeds of people driving to 20 – 25 MPH. They can be used on streets with truck traffic and higher traffic volumes than speed humps. They are not constructed in front of driveways.



When should you use a speed table?

- When the street's ADT is between 3,000 and 12,500
- When the posted speed limit is 25 – 35 MPH
- When neighbors have concerns about speeding in the middle of a block



Who pays for it?

- Block it is constructed on + one block in each direction

	Concrete
Total	Approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000; varies based on street width, utility work and/or ADA accommodations
Cost per linear foot of property frontage	Assessment is based on 33% recovery ratio in 2026. Typically \$5 to \$10.
Typical cost per property	40' frontage = \$200 to \$400 30' frontage = \$150 to \$300

Traffic Circle

A traffic circle is a raised, circular island in the middle of an intersection. Traffic circles slow driving speeds at intersections and are an ideal treatment for intersections without all-way stop signs or traffic signals.

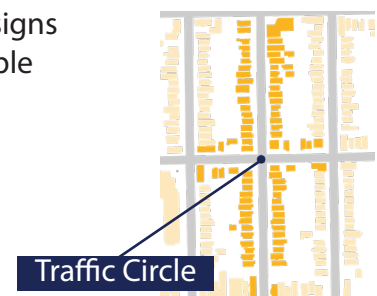


When should you use a traffic circle?

- When neighbors have concerns about people speeding through intersections
- When neighbors have concerns about people not obeying stop signs
- When it is a low volume street; an ADT of 3,000 or lower is desirable

Who pays for it?

- One block in each direction of the intersection



Traffic Calming Measures, continued

Traffic Circle, continued

	Pinned-on Concrete	Full Concrete
Total	Approximately \$15,000 to \$25,000; varies based on traffic circle size and utility work	Approximately \$25,000 to \$35,000; varies based on traffic circle size and utility work
Cost per linear foot of property frontage	\$3 to \$5	\$5 to \$7
Typical cost per property	40' frontage = \$120 to \$200 30' frontage = \$90 to \$150	40' frontage = \$200 to \$280 30' frontage = \$150 to \$210

Curb Extensions

Curb extensions, or bump-outs, extend the sidewalk area at intersections. They visually and physically narrow the street, creating safer and shorter crossings for people walking. They require people driving to slow down as they make turns.

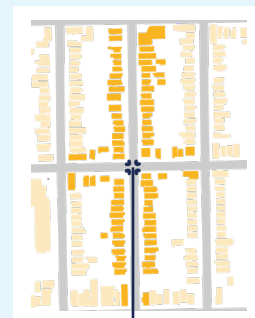
When should you use a curb extension?

- When neighbors want to slow speeds on a two-lane street
- When neighbors have concerns about high-speed turns at an intersection
- When people walking have difficulty crossing a street

Who pays for it?

- One block in each direction from the intersection

NOTE: Construction costs below are for one curb extension. Most projects will include more than one curb extension.



Curb Extension

	Pinned-on Concrete	Full Concrete
Total	Approximately \$7,000 per curb extension; varies based on curb extension size and utility work	Approximately \$25,000 per curb extension; varies based on curb extension size, utility work and/or ADA accommodations
Cost per linear foot of property frontage	\$2 per curb extension	\$5 per curb extension; Assessment based on 33% recovery ratio
Typical cost per property	40' frontage = \$80 30' frontage = \$60	40' frontage = \$200 30' frontage = \$150

Traffic Calming Measures, continued

Chicanes

Chicanes are two to three curb extensions placed midblock on opposite sides of the street, but not across from one another. They slow driving speeds considerably by shifting travel lanes left and right. Chicanes require repurposing some on-street parking spaces for the curb extensions.



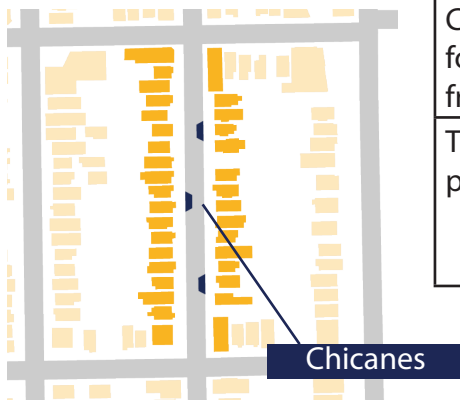
Note: Chicanes may not include green infrastructure, as pictured above.

When should you use chicanes?

- When the street's ADT is below 5,000 and about the same number of people drive in each direction on the street (not required but desirable)
- When residents want to slow speeds on a two-lane street

Who pays for it?

- Block it is constructed on



	Pinned-on Concrete	Full Concrete
Total	Approximately \$7,000 per curb extension; varies based on curb extension size and utility work	Approximately \$15,000 to \$25,000 per curb extension; varies based on curb extension size and utility work
Cost per linear foot of property frontage	\$4	\$5 to \$8
Typical cost per property	40' frontage = \$160 30' frontage = \$120	40' frontage = \$200 to \$320 30' frontage = \$150 to \$240

NOTE: Construction costs above are for one curb extension. A chicane project will have at least two curb extensions. Costs for chicanes differ from curb extensions because ADA ramps at corners are non-assessable, so a portion of the cost of the curb extension at the corner in the ADA ramps is not considered in the assessment calculation.

Neck-down

A neck-down, also known as a pinch point, is made of two curb extensions directly across from one another, typically in the middle of a block. In some cases, people driving may be required to merge into a single lane. Neck-downs may also be used to create or enhance a mid-block crosswalk; this type of treatment would require additional costs to those listed in the table. Neck-downs require repurposing some on-street parking spaces for the curb extensions.



Traffic Calming Measures, continued

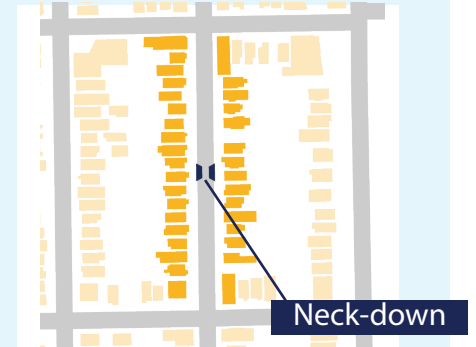
Neck-down, continued

When should you use a neck-down?

- When residents want to slow speeds on a two-lane street

Who pays for it?

- Block it is constructed on



NOTE: Construction costs below are for both (two) curb extensions.

	Pinned-on Concrete	Full Concrete
Total	Approximately \$14,000; varies based on curb extension size and utility work	Approximately \$30,000 to \$50,000; varies based on curb extension size and utility work
Cost per linear foot of property frontage	\$4	\$8.50 to \$15
Typical cost per property	40' frontage = \$160 30' frontage = \$120	40' frontage = \$340 to \$600 30' frontage = \$255 to \$450

Pedestrian Refuge Island

A pedestrian refuge island, or median, is a small, raised area in the middle of a street between opposing traffic lanes, either at an intersection or mid-block. It can be used to provide refuge for people crossing the street. Pedestrian refuge islands can slow both driving speeds and speeds of people making left turns onto the street with the pedestrian refuge island.



When should you use a pedestrian refuge island?

- When people walking have difficulty crossing a street
- When neighbors are concerned about high speeds on a higher volume street
- When neighbors are concerned about high-speed turns

Who pays for it?

Due to many variables, it is difficult to determine which blocks surrounding a pedestrian refuge island will be impacted. Interested in a pedestrian refuge island? Contact DPW staff at TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov to start the conversation.

Traffic Calming Lending Library

The Traffic Calming Lending Library allows residents to temporarily try certain traffic calming measures before committing to paying for their construction. DPW staff will deliver Traffic Calming Lending Library materials to your house for you and your neighbors to create a demonstration of the traffic calming measure(s) you're interested in. The demonstration can help gain support from residents who may be unsure about how traffic calming will work.

What's in the Traffic Calming Lending Library?



Cones



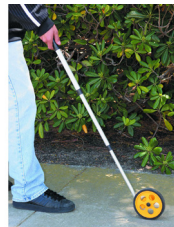
Looper Tubes



Parking Curbs



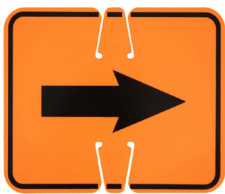
**Construction
Marking Paint**



Measuring Wheel



Safety Vests



Directional Signs



Data Collection Sheets

Traffic Calming Lending Library, continued

What can be made with the Traffic Calming Lending Library?

The following traffic calming measures can be temporarily tried out using materials from the Traffic Calming Lending Library. Please note that speed humps and speed tables cannot be demonstrated using these materials.

Traffic Circle

Materials:

- 4 Cones
- 4 Looper Tubes
- 8 Parking Curbs
- 4 Directional Signs



Curb Extensions

Materials:

- 3 Looper Tubes
- 5 Parking Curbs



Chicanes

Materials:

- 12 Looper Tubes (4 per curb extension)
- 15 Parking Curbs (5 per curb extension)



Neck-down

Materials:

- 8 Looper Tubes
- 10 Parking Curbs



Pedestrian Refuge Island

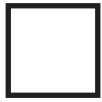
Materials:

- 3 Looper Tubes
- 6 Parking Curbs



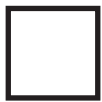
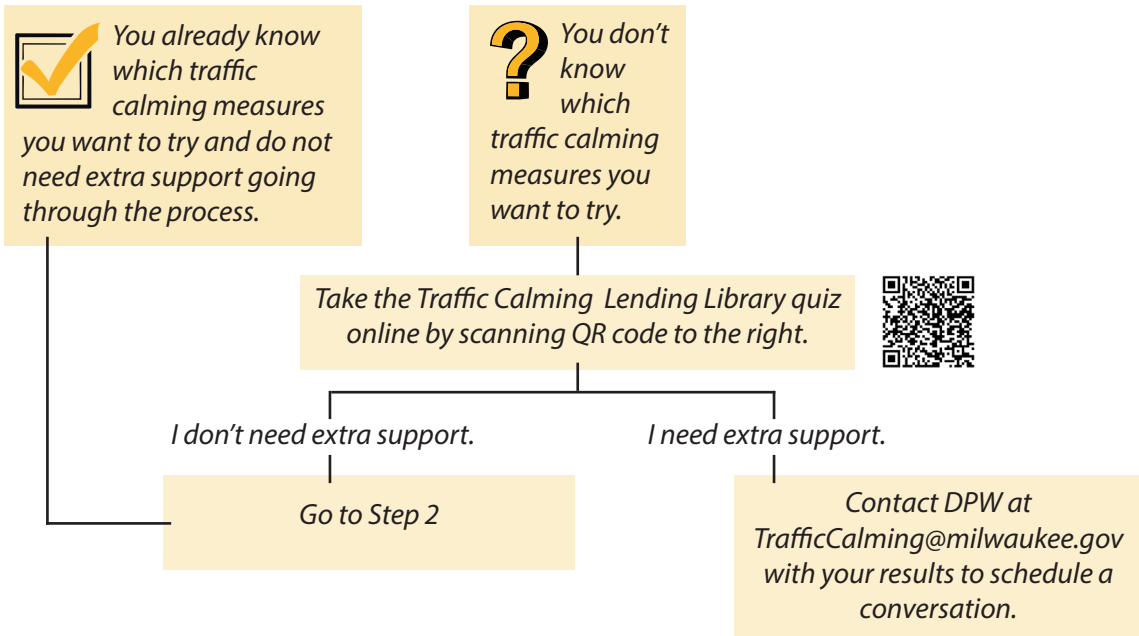
Traffic Calming Lending Library, continued

How can I use the Traffic Calming Lending Library?



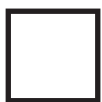
STEP 1 - Talk to your neighbors.

Discuss what issues you're seeing on your street and decide which of the following describes your situation.



STEP 2 - Fill out the Traffic Calming Lending Library request form.

Put in your request two to four weeks before you want to use the materials. Be prepared to send the street you're working on, the type of measure(s) you want to try out, and two to three potential dates that you want to use them.



STEP 3 - DPW staff will review your request.

You'll receive drawings depicting the elements in the street that you will need to reference when creating the traffic calming measure(s). You'll also receive a Traffic Calming Lending Library borrowers agreement to sign and return prior to receiving materials.

Traffic Calming Lending Library, continued



STEP 4 - Receive the Traffic Calming Lending Library materials.

DPW staff will deliver materials to your location at an agreed upon time. You must have a secure place to store them before and after your demonstration.



STEP 5 - Create your traffic calming measure(s).

Use the drawings and instructions from DPW staff to create your selected traffic calming measure(s). Depending on how busy the street is, DPW staff may assist you with the demonstration.



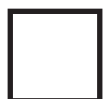
STEP 6 - Make observations.

With your neighbors, see if the traffic calming measure is having the effect you wanted. If you're trying more than one, does one work better than others? Take photos and videos, and make notes so you have documentation of what you liked, what you didn't like, and any questions you have for DPW staff. You'll receive a data collection sheet to assist you in knowing what to collect.



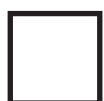
STEP 7 - Deconstruct the traffic calming measure(s).

The demonstration should last at least two hours, and up to a day. Traffic Calming Lending Library materials *should not* be left out overnight.



STEP 8 - Return the Traffic Calming Lending Library materials.

DPW staff will pick up the materials at an agreed upon time and provide users with a follow-up survey to fill out about their experience with the library.



STEP 9 - Request permanent construction through the Community-Led Traffic Calming Program.

See Page 2 of this guidebook.



Community-Led Traffic Calming Request Form

To request traffic calming measures from the Community-Led Traffic Calming program, please complete this request form. Submit the completed form and the Community-Led Traffic Calming signature sheet with signatures from **at least 50% of addresses on the impacted block(s)** that will be assessed for the project.

For information on the program and available traffic calming measures, please refer to the Community-Led Traffic Calming guidebook.

Completed form and signatures sheet should be emailed to TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov.

Your Information

Full Name:

Mailing Address:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Information about the Traffic Calming Site

Address for Traffic Calming (if different than above):

Zip Code for Traffic Calming (if different than above):

What is your relationship with the street? Check all that apply.

- I own property on this street
- I rent property on this street
- I work on this street
- I go to school on this street
- I frequent this street for transportation
- I frequent this street for exercise
- Other (please explain)

Information about the Traffic Calming Site, continued

Is there school(s) on the street? If yes, please include the name(s) of the school(s).

Is there a park or publicly-owned community facility on the street? If yes, please include the name(s) of the facility.

Please describe the reason you are requesting traffic calming at this location (speeding, difficult to cross the street, frequent crashes, etc).

Please select the traffic calming measure(s) you would like to see implemented on this street. Check all that apply.

- Speed Hump
- Speed Table
- Traffic Circle
- Curb Extensions
- Chicanes
- Neck-down
- Traffic Island

Please share the location(s) you would like to see the measure(s) installed. (Ex: Curb extensions on W. Vliet Street at the intersection of N. 52nd Street)

Submit this completed form and the signature sheet with signatures from at least 50% of addresses on the impacted block(s) that will be assessed for the project to TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov.



Community-Led Traffic Calming Signature Sheet

We, the undersigned residents, are requesting the City of Milwaukee to move forward in a request for Community-Led Traffic Calming at the following location:

We, the undersigned residents, feel that the following traffic calming measure(s) would best address the problems we are experiencing at this location:

- Speed Hump
- Speed Table
- Traffic Circle
- Curb Extensions
- Chicanes
- Neck-down
- Traffic Island

We, the undersigned residents, understand that this request is contingent upon further review and due diligence from the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works (DPW). DPW review may include, but is not limited to, roadway classification; street width; traffic volumes and existing speed studies; crash history of the street; nearby neighborhood parks, schools, or other important locations; future projects on the street; and utility conflicts. Please see the "Program Overview" section in the Community-Led Traffic Calming guidebook for additional details on next steps that will be taken by DPW.

NOTE: This request **does not** authorize the approval or construction of any traffic calming measures or other changes to the street. **The abutting property owners are assessed a portion of the construction cost.**

Instructions

Please collect signatures from at least 50% of the residents on the impacted block(s). If you are unsure about what area you need to collect from, refer to the "Traffic Calming Measures" section in the Community-Led Traffic Calming guidebook for additional details. If you have additional questions, please reach out to TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov.

Please write legibly and print as many sheets as needed for your neighborhood petition area and note the number of pages at the bottom.



Traffic Calming Lending Library Request Form

The Traffic Calming Lending Library allows residents to temporarily try certain traffic calming measures before committing to paying for their construction. City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works (DPW) staff will deliver the request Traffic Calming Lending Library materials to your house for you and your neighbors to create a demonstration of the traffic calming measure(s) you're interested in. The demonstration can help gain support from residents who may be unsure about how traffic calming will work.

Fill please out this request form in its entirety **at least two to four weeks** before you would like to use the Traffic Calming Lending Library materials and email the form to TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov.

For complete details, please review the "Traffic Calming Lending Library" section of the Community-Led Traffic Calming guidebook.

Your Information

Full Name:

Mailing Address:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Information about the Traffic Calming & Demonstration Site

Address for Traffic Calming Demonstration (if different than above):

Zip Code for Traffic Calming Demonstration (if different than above):

What is your relationship with the street? Check all that apply.

- I own property on this street
- I rent property on this street
- I work on this street
- I go to school on this street
- I frequent this street for transportation
- I frequent this street for exercise

Other (please explain)

Information about the Traffic Calming & Demonstration Site, continued

Please describe the reason you are exploring traffic calming at this location (speeding, difficult to cross the street, frequent crashes, etc).

Please select the traffic calming measure(s) you would like to use the Traffic Calming Lending Library for on this street. Check all that apply.

- Traffic Circle
- Curb Extensions
- Chicanes
- Neck-down
- Traffic Island

Preferred Date and Time for Demonstration:

Alternate Date and Time for Demonstration:

Fill please out this request form in its entirety at least two to four weeks before you would like to use the Traffic Calming Lending Library materials and email the form to **TrafficCalming@milwaukee.gov**.